

## **Chapter 6. CONSULTATION**

Chapter 7 of the Final Environmental Document (FED) explains the role that consultation with other agencies, professionals, and the public plays in the Department's marine resource management programs. Department staff involved in herring resource management are in contact with other agencies, professional biologists and researchers involved in herring management on a regular basis. The Department's Bay Delta Branch was consulted on the potential impacts to endangered and threatened salmonids should the minimum mesh size in San Francisco Bay be reduced to 2-in. (Section 3.6.2 of this FSED). The Fish and Wildlife Service, NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service, Environmental Protection Agency, and other state and federal agencies received all environmental documents that have been prepared regarding Pacific herring. To date, we have not received any comments from these agencies.

Consultations also occur during the annual review of regulations guiding the commercial harvest of herring. The process began this year when the Department presented the results of its annual population assessment and discussed possible regulatory changes for the 2005-06 season with the Director's Herring Advisory Committee (DHAC) on April 5, 2005.

Proposed changes to the regulations for the 2005-06 were modified, as necessary, based on comments from the DHAC, and those received at the public meetings on April 12, 2005. The public meetings also served as a scoping session for the content of the Draft Supplemental Environmental Document (DSED). These recommendations were presented to the Fish and Game Commission at their August 19, 2005 meeting, and will be potentially adopted at their September 30, 2005 meeting.

Prior to preparation of the DSED, the Department initiated a broader consultation by distributing an NOP that announced the intent to prepare the document dated March 21, 2005. In the NOP, the Department requested submission of views on the scope and content of the environmental information to be contained therein. The notice was distributed to members of the public and

interested organizations that had expressed prior interest in herring management. The NOP was also provided to the State Clearinghouse for distribution to appropriate responsible and trustee agencies.